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From Left: Sergeant Major of the Army Jack L. Tilley, Sergeant Major Ronnie L. Edwards, Command Master Chief James P. Russell, Master Gunnery Sergeant James P. O'Keefe, Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Gerald R. Murray, Command Master Chief Patricia A. Stolle, Command Sergeant Major Michele S. Jones

DoD Worldwide Education Symposium

Orlando, FL

Senior Enlisted Panel

"Enhanced Readiness through Education for the Enlisted Force"

Tuesday, 8 July 2003 (1035)

Moderator, Master Gunnery Sergeant James O'Keefe:

MGySgt O'Keefe:

"Thank you Mr. Woods. Good morning.

Welcome to the Worldwide 2003 Senior Enlisted Panel.

It is my privilege to introduce the senior enlisted leadership here today- representing all Services.

Collectively, these professionals have over 160 years of combined leadership experience and Service to our country. I encourage you later-to review their Bios for dates, assignments and awards. You'll find them in the Symposium Program.

These leaders serve in positions of high visibility- whether testifying before Congress on quality of life issues or serving as senior enlisted role models for hundreds of thousands of enlisted men and women in uniform. They provide sage advice and counsel to their commanders with candid feedback on the life of the enlisted Service member today.

They are here today to provide a brief insight into the future of our enlisted force and to speak to the theme of "Enhanced Readiness through Education for the Enlisted Force."

So without further delay, let's get started.

Our first guest speaker serves as the personal advisor to the Army Chief of Staff on all enlisted-related matters, especially in areas affecting soldier training and quality of life. A native of Vancouver Washington, much of his time is committed to traveling and talking to soldiers and their families. His military career spans over 3 decades. A graduate of the First Sergeants Course, Sergeants Major Academy, Basic Airborne CRS, Drill Sergeant School and Master Gunner's Course- and the list goes on... He has held every key leadership position from section leader to Sergeant Major of the Army.

Ladies and Gentlemen, please join me in welcoming the 12th Sergeant Major of the Army, Jack L. Tilley.

***Remarks as delivered by the Sergeant Major of the Army, SMA Jack L. Tilley,
Orlando World Center Marriott, Tuesday, 8 July 2003***

SMA Tilley:

I want everybody to say, "I love education!" ah no, I'm gonna say one, two, three, I want everyone to say, "I love education!" One, two, three, (audience responds). I can see you're a little brain dead, you're gonna have to stay after school (laughter).

First of all let me tell you thanks a lot for allowing me to be here. Education is important to all of us. There's no question about that. But I want to tell you a little story real quick.

I have some notes here I'm gonna make sure I cover. But, I have two grandbabies. I have a four-year old and a seven-year old- just turned seven the 22nd of May. And I talked to my wife the other day and I told her "hey look, quit buying those grandbabies presents."

Yea, you're already laughing. That's exactly just what she did. I said, "quit buying those grandbabies presents" and she looked at me. I've been married thirty-three years and my wife is absolutely my best friend. She sort of looked at me and ignored me and walked away.

About a week later, my granddaughter called me on the phone, the oldest one, she was six at that time, she says, "grandpa, Jordan wants to talk to you." I said OK! Let me talk to Jordan. Jordan's four. I like to talk to Jordan. Let me talk to her- I feel good about that.

So Jordan got on the phone and we started talking back and forth. She says, "grandpa, how you doing?" I said, fine. "I want a baby bed." I said – OK. We'll send it to you (laughter).

You can see who's in charge at my house. So I went to my wife and said, "will you please buy them a couple of baby beds and send it to them- and she did.

And about a week later I got another phone call from Destiny. She's seven now. But she really talks like she's about thirty-five or forty.

She's really, really smart. I said, Destiny how ya doing? She says, "pretty good." She says, "grandpa, I want to thank you for giving me and Jordan a baby bed." I said, that's OK, I'll do anything I can to help you out. I don't care what it is I'll help you out anytime that I can.

I said, Destiny, since you called to thank me for the baby bed, can I ask you just a few questions? She said, "sure grampa, go ahead." I said, how you doing in school? Have you gotten any of those happy faces or sad faces lately?

She says, "grampa, we don't get happy faces or sad faces anymore. We get sats or unsats." (laughter)

Now stay with me here a little bit all right? It is about motivation. It is about education. It's about our future. It's about our kids. It's about our grandchildren. It's about Destiny. They are our future.

So I said to Destiny, “well, look baby have you got any unsats?” And she said, “well, yes I did. I got an unsat the other day for not finishing my homework.”

And I did what any grandfather or father would do. I started counseling. I said, now look Destiny. I want you to finish school. I want you to go to college. I want you to do all the things that maybe I didn't have the opportunity to do- because education is so important. I want you to do those things because it's important to me and your grandmother and your mother and father and even to Jordan- to all of us. We want you to get a good education.

And she said just the most wonderful thing to me. She said, “grampa?” I said, yes baby. She said, “I just want to make it to the second grade!” (laughter).

Education is fun! Education is our future! There's no question about that. So I want to thank you for inviting me to be here and thanks for your continued support for the enlisted core and their family members.

As you know, right now we have 370,000 soldiers forward deployed in about 120 different locations around the world. And nearly 175,000 soldiers that are in Iraq and Afghanistan.

These Soldiers are focused on bringing peace and stability to the Iraqi and Afghanistan people. They are learning a lot about the world. And as a Soldier, and a lot of you out here are Soldiers, and I tell you, if you're in civilian clothing, working for the military, you are Soldiers too- there's no question about that- or Marines or Navy or Air Force.

We're all in this together. We're a family. They're learning a lot about the world. About what people are capable of doing- good and bad. And they're learning a lot about themselves. Just like we have- about the importance of education. About the importance of staying in school.

I go to my hometown every year. I'm so proud to be a high school graduate from Fort Vancouver High School in my hometown.

But about a year ago I starting looking to see how many young adults drop out of school. And the national average in my state was about nineteen percent (drop out of school). That's unacceptable.

Education is our future. Soon many of these Soldiers that are deployed will be coming home to their families and to you and to civilian education. And they want to get back on track with their civilian education.

You know, I continue to be amazed at the resilience of our Soldiers and their desire to get their post-secondary degree education completed. Soldiers are focused on their education. There is no question about that. In Afghanistan, Kosovo, Bosnia countless remote locations, armed with a laptop and an Internet connection and their books, they are plugging in to get their education. They are taking one more step toward a degree. 60,000 Soldiers in all between our distance education and those enrolled in eArmyU. That's incredible. But we need to be better.

We need to make sure that Soldiers are in tune, getting in school, no matter where we're deployed they need to make sure they have the opportunity to get in school.

Even when I was in Afghanistan here about four or five weeks ago, they're setting up an education program in Afghanistan so Soldiers can take school while they're there. It's important and a vital step and one that you understand completely, because you are there.

You're guiding our Soldiers, helping them fulfill that dream. Programs like 100 percent Tuition Assistance, eArmyU, SOCAD agreements and the counseling from you are keeping people in school and they're also keeping people in uniform.

I was really thrilled early this year when I heard that Georgia changed its rules and joined fifteen other states that have Soldier family-friendly in-state tuition rules. And we need to make sure that we not only have those other fifteen states but we get the entire nation to do that same thing that Georgia is doing. As you know the Army is working hard to make it a reality in every state. I think that eventually we will make happen.

I continue to be impressed when I go to places like Kosovo and I visit education centers. Because everywhere I go, I stop and make sure that I talk to our education counselors. And their enthusiasm- when you go into a door and you start talking to a counselor and they're smiling and they're pumping you up about staying in school, and how can they help you get a better education, because it's about their future.

You know Soldiers don't stay in the Army because they're going to get rich, there is no question about that. We are preparing our Soldiers for retirement in twenty years to have that college degree (pause). Your enthusiasm, the computer labs and the outstanding instructors and people that make a difference- and you are those people.

I want you to know that I love eArmyU. I think it's the right thing for the Army. But right now, since we went to 100 percent tuition assistance, I think we're going to have a little bit of a problem funding both. The Army is looking at it right now. I don't know how it's going to come out. But I would just simply tell you that I'm on the side for eArmyU because Soldiers really love it.

I need to tell you one more thing too and then I'll be quiet because they've only given me ten minutes to talk. The Army right now is stretched really thin. We have lost one hundred, seventy-six Soldiers- have been killed, and over five hundred have been wounded.

The Army is certainly going through tough times right now. And so I tell you, if there is anything that you can do to help Soldiers with education, to help their families with education- take that extra step. Take that extra step to make our Soldiers and their family members better every day- because that will be your legacy. Hopefully that will be our legacy.

It's not what you do today; it's how you leave everything today for the people behind you. So I ask you- don't slow down on education. Take that extra step and make it better for all of us. God bless you and thank you for allowing me to come here today. Have a great Army day.

MGySgt O'Keefe:

Thank you Sergeant Major Tilley-

Our next guest speaker enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1976. A native of Greenville Mississippi, he has served in a multitude of leadership positions including Drill Instructor, Chief Drill Instructor, Academic Chief to Officer Candidates School, Operations Chief to the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Security Guard Detachment Commander to the American Embassy in West Africa- and more recently as SgtMaj of the Oldest Post of the Corps, Marine Barracks, Washington DC. And presently serving as the SgtMaj, Personal and Family Readiness Division, HQ, US Marine Corps- responsible for providing policy, plans, resources and direct support to the Marine Corps Community Services field activities.

Ladies and gentlemen, representing the Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, please welcome SgtMaj Ronnie L. Edwards.

Remarks as delivered by the Sergeant Major, Personal and Family Readiness Division, United States Marine Corps, Sergeant Major Ronnie L. Edwards, Orlando World Center Marriott, Tuesday, 8 July 2003

SgtMaj Edwards:

Well good morning. On behalf of the fifteenth Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, Sergeant Major Estrada, it's an honor for me to be here today and also a pleasure to address such a fine audience. I speak to you on behalf of all enlisted Marines in the Marine Corps.

LtGen Parks mentioned the "total Marine" concept which is a bold initiative by the Marine Corps to enhance combat readiness and provide an avenue for personal and professional growth. In order to meet the changing, worldly demands required of the Marine Corps, Marines must be equipped with the best and most advanced hardware.

However, a Marine without proper, appropriate, mental or physical skills, this hardware would be basically useless. To take full advantage of this provided hardware, the total Marine must be well rounded in all facets of his life, to include education, or should I say- especially education.

Therefore, the Marine Corps continues to move toward a faster, more efficient, more educated Corps. And one that continues to push responsibility downward. It relies on advances in technology to ensure our Service has a place on the twenty-first century battlefield.

There are a number of programs within Lifelong Learning that are targeting the education needs of our Marines and their family members. The newest initiative that we're working on, LtGen Parks spoke about this in his brief, and it's called the Marine Corps Career College Program. The goal of this program is threefold.

First of all, we look to improve combat readiness by capitalizing on the professional military education and lifelong learning continuums.

Second, to ensure every Marine, by the end of their first enlistment, has the opportunity to obtain a military occupational specialty-related academic credential from an institution of higher learning.

And thirdly, to retain highly qualified Marines or return to the civilian sector, if they choose to get out, a better, more productive individual.

So in a nutshell, how do we plan to do this? What we're attempting to do is to tie each MOS to a specialized degree plan that will focus on MOS proficiency, which will increase combat readiness. That degree program will be accredited by the American Council on Education (ACE). Academic partners, like some of you in the audience, will endorse the degree plan and you will adhere to accept it's credit recommendations, which in the end will lead to a certificate, an associates degree, a diploma- or a combination of all three.

The fourteenth Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, who was Sergeant Major McMichael, he always had a saying when he talked about education. And when he finished his spiel, whatever that may be, he always ended with the phrase, "GED to college degree." And think to yourself, what a powerful recruiting tool that could be for our recruiters.

In the very near future, as part of the Marine Corps Career College Program, we will run a pilot program that will target those three MOSs. And this pilot program will be tested for a year. And the purpose is to accumulate enough data to test reporting procedures and the probability to fit all Marine Corps MOSs. We're not going to do this if we can't take care of all enlisted Marines, all Marines within the Marine Corps.

We're all excited about this new initiative. And let me provide you some background information. You know, we like hearing about stats. Let me give you some stats that show why education and tuition assistance is important to the Marines of our Corps.

In 2000, Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS) conducted an assessment of Commanders and Staff Non-commissioned Officers regarding their views of the importance of various MCCS programs. In addition, other studies concurred that educational benefits contribute to job performance and readiness.

Lifelong learning was ranked number 1 as 62 percent for those programs that contribute to mission outcomes.

Our library program that the General also spoke about, which we are very proud of, ranked as number 2 at 61 percent.

Also, Lifelong Learning was voted number 4 at 71 percent for the most satisfying MCCS program behind physical fitness, transitional services and personal finance.

Education is not the primary reason to join the Marine Corps. But 50 percent of recruits and their parents, very important, rank educational benefits as the number 3 reason to join the military service.

The 2000 Marine Corps Retention Survey shows 40 percent of Marines agreed that more educational opportunities would encourage them to reenlist. Only 28 percent disagreed.

A 2001 Wall Street Journal article stated that tuition assistance is the number one selected choice for retaining employees in businesses.

In FY02 the Marine Corps spent about 17 million dollars on tuition assistance.

In FY03, we've been funded to meet demand, which is an increase of about 70 percent over fiscal year 02.

That's enough stats. I'm pretty sure you all get the picture. I want all of you out there to know that we the Marines recognize the value of voluntary education. And we appreciated the sacrifices and successes of the entire DoD community as well as all the professionals who support you.

When I first came into the Marine Corps in 1976, voluntary education, distance learning, all that stuff didn't exist for the most part. As long as you stayed on top of your military correspondence courses, you were pretty much good to go. A young Marine today, if you were to ask them today, "why are you leaving the Marine Corps?"- especially a first-termer, if you asked why are you leaving the Marine Corps, he will tell you, nine times out of ten, "I'm going to college. I want to go to college, I want to get my degree."

With the establishment of the Marine Corps Career College Program, in the future, when we ask a young Marine, "why is he/she leaving the Marine Corps?" We hope to get a different answer. And we hope that answer will be, "Sergeant Major I'm leaving the Marine Corps because I want to utilize my college degree to work for this company or to work for that business. And that, my friends, is quality of life at its finest.

And again to reiterate LtGen Parks, we all know there are challenges ahead. But with your continued support, we can make that saying, "GED to college degree" a reality. The success of our Marines in the twenty-first century will rely on continued leadership and innovations.

"Every Marine a rifleman" is an adage that strikes fear in the hearts and soul of the enemy. The term "Every Marine a smarter rifleman" will ultimately reflect the changing role of modern warfare. Thank you and you all have a great conference.

MGySgt O'Keefe:

Thank you Sergeant Major Edwards-

Our next guest speaker joined the Navy in 1979. A native of Antlers Oklahoma, he is a qualified Navy diver. A graduate of the Navy Nuclear Power School, he has served as Engineering Officer of the watch,

Engineering duty officer, Chief of the boat, and Lead diver. A graduate of the Army Sergeants Major Academy and Navy Senior enlisted Academy with honors, he has served in multiple billets as Command Master Chief. The former Command Master Chief of Navy Task Force EXCEL and currently serving as the first Command Master Chief of Naval Personnel Development Command,

Ladies and Gentlemen, representing the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, please welcome Command Master Chief James Phillip Russell.

***Remarks as delivered by the Master Chief Petty Officer James Philip Russell,
Command Master Chief of Naval Personnel Development Command, Orlando
World Center Marriott, Tuesday, 8 July 2003***

MCPO Russell:

Man, what a sight. I never had the opportunity, or the pleasure to stand in front of an academic review board. Now I can realize that that's a good thing. (laughter)

I was going to stand up here and talk to you about the revolution in training and task force excel, and all that. Let's see we talked about that. We talked about that.

OK. So, I'm going to depart from the prepared script here and I'm going to make the camera man work a little bit because I really hate to stand behind a podium.

Enhanced readiness through education of the enlisted force. What a phenomenal idea. And you would think that it is not a new one. But the reality of it is that in the Navy, in times past, a college degree for an enlisted Sailor was interesting, but not necessarily relevant. And in fact, the support for that at the 'deck plate' level was minimal.

Times have really changed. Ninety-one percent of our Sailors who come in the Navy today, come in with the idea that the United States Navy is going to assist them with their advanced education needs and desires- phenomenal.

Thirty-five thousand Sailors today are enrolled in tuition assistance education programs. That's only nine months into the year. We expect that to continue to grow. Right now we're twenty-eight percent above what we did last year at this time. Talk about people demonstrating their desire and their need for personal growth. It is incredible.

But it's all about opportunity. Not one Sailor gets out of the rack in the morning looks in the mirror and says, "hey you know what, today I'm going to fail." Not one does that. They all want to achieve. They want to better themselves. They want to grow, personally and professionally.

And I am honored to stand in front a group of people who deliver opportunity to our Sailors. Thank you very much for what you do. It's incredible. Thank you (applause).

Vice Admiral Harms laid out what the five-vector model is for. And once again, that's all about opportunity. It's about laying out a career path for a Sailor. So that that Sailor understands that if they choose to stick with the organization, they know what opportunities lie ahead.

The components of the five-vector model are all engineered and designed to support the Sailor in what we need them to do for the Navy- on the professional development vector.

On the quals and certifications vector, the things that are on there are civilian qualifications and certifications that equate to what we ask them to do in the Navy.

In times past, what we've done to our Sailors is asked them to make a decision. This is the path you follow if you want to pursue your professional goals and this is the path you follow if you want to pursue your personal growth needs. We didn't do a real good job early in bringing those two paths together.

The five-vector model is going to be able to bring those things together such that, when a Sailor does the things that we ask them to do, as a matter of course, they will have an opportunity to meet their personal growth needs, what a phenomenal idea. I'm excited. Can you tell?

They tell me I'm the chief evangelist and leading recruiter for revolution in training. So stand by. I'll be signing you up later.

The bottom line is- college education and the opportunity to gain more skills are going to be available to our Sailors to a degree that we have never imagined before.

Let's take, for instance, an MS Specialist- a cook, if you will. The path that we are growing for them, which is currently being tested, is that they will meet the education requirements by the end of their first tour to become a culinary specialist. And for those of you, who are familiar with that, that entails quite a bit of college education.

That is an example of how we are going to invest in the individual Sailor to make sure that one- we're getting a better Sailor, more capable of meeting mission; and two- we're getting a happy Sailor because they are able to pursue their personal growth needs.

Now for any of you that have been out on the tip of the spear, and a lot of you I know have. You'd think, well, what does a cook have to do with mission readiness? (laughter) Well, I'll tell you. When you're an aviation ordnanceman and you're loading bombs and missiles on aircraft for 14 hours a day and you get your chance to eat your ONE meal of the day, and you go down there, and it's not a good one, your readiness suffers- I guarantee it.

Each one of you has a piece of the readiness at the tip of the spear. When you train and teach and educate our Sailors, you provide them the tools they need to be able to think on their feet, to meet situations that weren't programmed, or that they hadn't trained for and come out on top.

You know this little thing way back when, now that is fading in people's memory, called the Cold War? The reason we were able to beat the Russians was that our individual Sailor, Soldier, Airman, Marine, and Coastguardsman were able to face whatever situation they came up to and not have to go back and ask what the answer was.

They were able to think on their feet, react, respond and reply. And that's based on the critical thinking skills and the strategic thought processes that are delivered, almost embedded, in a college education or advanced education of different types.

So, when you ask the question, does investing education in the enlisted force promote positive readiness? Resoundingly, the answer has to be yes- without a doubt, without a doubt.

But we need your help. We need your help because of the way we're expanding the five-vector model process in the Navy. And we're making more and more of these college opportunities requirements for Sailors to get the skills and knowledge and tools and abilities they need to be successful. They're going to have to be available.

That means that more and more and more Sailors are going to be coming to you for your product-, which is education. And the question that I have is, and maybe you've already answered it and I just don't know- is the Navy College Program ready to answer that bell? Are we ready to expand to meet a demand that's going to be driven by a Sailor's desire not only to educate themselves but potentially to promote in our organization?

Now, note that I didn't say degree. I just said education opportunities.

Why shouldn't a yeoman be required to have an English 101 class? I've known a few yeomen who couldn't benefit from that.

Shouldn't an air traffic controller in the military be able to get their FAA certification as a matter of course of what they do?

Shouldn't a truck mechanic in the Seabees be able to get certified through the American Society of Engineers?

We've asked those questions. The answers we got were, 'well you know, if they get all that education, they're going to leave and take that investment right with them.'

I disagree. The reason I disagree is because the numbers indicate that when you provide 60 college hours of education to a Sailor, at a rate of 24 percent above the norm- they stay with the institution that invested in them.

And not only that. At the E-5 level they have a 35 percent higher chance of advancing to E-5 under our current promotion scheme than everybody else in their field. So a little education goes a long way to enhancing readiness because now our finest and brightest are out there on the tip of the spear using those critical thinking skills, adjusting, adapting, and responding and taking care of business the way they need to be taking care of business.

So that's where we're going with the revolution in training. It's a phenomenal concept. It's been a twisted tornado that I've been riding for the last two years. This is how I spent my summer vacation.

So in closing, I guess what I'd like to do is I'd like to thank you. And I'd like to thank you on two levels. One, for the work that you're doing providing, promoting and making sure that our people understand and can benefit from the programs which you all so passionately support.

And on the second level I'd like to thank you as an American citizen. You know, the basic thing that a military member wants to do, their dream- is to make a difference. They want to know that the place they're leaving is a little bit better for their being there, and that whatever they did was appreciated as they move on to deliver that same contribution to the next place.

The men and women who wear the cloth of their Nation are out there making a difference in our world today. And they do it day in and day out and it's evidenced and visible.

The reason they understand their contribution is meaningful is because of the response that you, and American citizens like you across the Nation, have given them. In countless ways, day in and day out. Whether it's giving your seat up on a bus, whether it's getting a free drink on an airplane, whether it's a special deal here or a special deal there. It's phenomenal.

I have never been more proud in the 24 years of naval service to wear the cloth of my Nation as I am today. And for that, ladies and gentlemen, from the Sailors of the United States Navy- thank you very much.

MGySgt O'Keefe:

Thank you Command Master Chief Russell-

Our next guest speaker serves as the personal adviser to the Chief of Staff and the Secretary of the Air Force on all issues regarding the welfare of the enlisted force. A native of Boiling Springs, N.C., he entered the Air Force in 1977. With a background in aircraft maintenance, he has served as aircraft crew chief and aircraft maintenance instructor. He has served in multiple assignments throughout the world as

Command Chief Master Sergeant. He holds an associate in applied science degree in aircraft systems maintenance technology and an associate of arts degree in liberal arts. He is a distinguished graduate at both the Noncommissioned Officer Academy and Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy. He has held every key leadership position from Airman to Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force.

Ladies and Gentlemen, please join me in welcoming the 14th Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, Gerald R. Murray

***Remarks as delivered by the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force,
CMSAF Gerald R. Murray, Orlando World Center Marriott, Tuesday, 8 July 2003***

CMSAF Murray:

Thank you for being here to take part in this focus on the education of our enlisted force. You know I've been in this job now for just over a year. In fact, the first of this month was one year in the job.

I've certainly learned my place well, following three distinguished colleagues as we do these panels. I've also learned that at this point and time that I could just say ditto and move the program along.

I've also become convinced that the Sergeant Major of the Army has a mole in my office because no matter what I prepare, it seems that he speaks on that subject and does it better than I do. (laughter)

They made note as we began that we have collectively 160 years of experience between us here. Of course, the Master Chief Petty Officer from the Coast Guard and I were pointing down to this end and we know that it leans heavier on those years of experience (pointing to SMA Tilley) (laughter).

As Jack pointed out, he has two grandchildren, one, the age of seven. Sheri and I have a CHILD that's age seven. (laughter)

As the Sergeant Major liked to brag of that bright seven-year-old, Destiny, I'd also like to brag on that seven-year-old daughter, Elizabeth of mine and Sheri. Sheri and I celebrated our 28th wedding anniversary not long ago so, Elizabeth was born a little later in life. But Elizabeth finished the first grade this year. Elizabeth finished the first grade with her first major award. She got the 'ready reader' award for a goal that she set at the beginning of the first grade to read 100 books. She achieved that goal and got the award of the ready reader (applause).

Since we have moved to Washington, DC, Elizabeth thinks that's pretty cool. My older son, Stephen of 14 says, "that's tight." Elizabeth pointed out that Washington's made quite an impression on her.

On seeing Mom and Dad go visit the President a few times and pictures with the President and Mrs., she wanted to know, how come there have been no women Presidents? She has set a goal (applause).

So Sheri and I are all about partnering with people to help Elizabeth realize that goal of becoming the President of the United States or whatever she wants to achieve, just as we partner with you to help people achieve goals in our enlisted force through voluntary education.

And thank you so much for helping so many realize those goals and dreams. Well, it's a pleasure to be here with each of you and our sister Services as well to express our gratitude and to speak of the importance of what our enlisted men and women do through continuing education. Without you our enlisted and NCO corps and military would not be the envy of the world.

Now, earlier during our Senior Officer Panel, our representative from the Air Force, Major General Sutton eloquently spoke, I think, and provided for those of you here, the priorities and the focus of our Air Force today when it comes to that partnership and the focus on education.

He spoke of one of our key, and I think the most important of our core competencies that have been provided to us so well by our Secretary of the Air Force, Dr. Jim Roche and our Chief of Staff, General John Jumper.

The cornerstone of our core competencies is developing Airmen. In this ever-changing, high-tech, and often dangerous world that we live in, we must do a better job of ensuring that our Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, and Coastguardsmen, our leaders, the officers, NCOs, and civilians are better prepared and ready for the future of what lies ahead. Education, skill, and experience are keys to our success.

While General Sutton spoke of our need to do more than to leave our career or leadership development to chance, we know that our Airmen, our military members, can not and will not advance through the ranks without a continuing education.

Of course, we provide the basics through our tech schools and PME, but much more important is the education they get with your help and our education service centers, the colleges and universities on base close to them around the world, and more and more through the mediums of computers and the Internet.

Fortunately or unfortunately, today this is a must- because today we are busier than ever. Our operational tempo is nothing short of incredible.

We had over 40,000 Airmen of the smallest Air Force, almost the smallest Air Force military member-wise, that we have been since our inception in 1947. We had over 40,000 deployed in Southwest Asia supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom- over 250,000 members directly involved in that operation. And more so in the global war on terrorism out of a total force, in fact a reliance on our great national treasure of our guard and reserve forces of a total force of just over 500,000. So just over 50 percent of our force was committed to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Now, while we strive to give our people deployment predictability in an AEF, called an Air Expeditionary Force process of a 90-day rotation every 15 months, the reality is that through the Global War on Terrorism and Operation Iraqi Freedom, we had to suspend that operation, as we know that we plan to do so anytime we enter a major operation or war.

Now we're in the process through two transitional Air Expeditionary Forces of getting back on track to what General Jumper describes as our 'battle rhythm.'

We hope to be able to return to that in 2004. We must provide our people predictability and stability in their lives. For their families, for their well-being, and for providing them the opportunity to realize their goals and advance in the careers of their chosen profession.

What this means to us in this room is that there will be many more people who put their education goals on hold as we fight this war. And their attention will focus back to off-duty education.

Now I know you'll be there when they get back to take care of their needs and help them meet their educational goals. In fact, in many ways you are there with them where they are.

Every opportunity, and I was speaking and some of you know this, that as soon as we can stabilize an area or a base, we're bringing in test monitors, we're bringing in ability through your help to deliver education to them where they are in any situation that they're in. We partner with you and our academic institutions. We have more than 300 on-base schools and issue tuition assistance to over 1200 schools.

Many of you are representatives of those schools. And again, I thank you so much for the work that you've done over the years providing our people the opportunity to further their education in the future. And there's certainly more to do.

Currently, in our enlisted force, we have 15% of our total enlisted force with an associate's degree, less than 5% with a Bachelors degree, and even less than that, 1%, with a Masters degree.

As General Sutton pointed out, we've now expanded our Air Force Institute of technology to provide advanced degrees for enlisted members that we hope will continue.

We are reevaluating the level and requirements for education in our enlisted force because of the growth of technology and an ever increasing need for that education in our force. It truly has brought us to be a professional group of men and women in our NCO Corps.

The need for more technical-oriented degrees is there. In fact, I would stress to you that as we have shifted in our officer accessions, more in the numbers of technical degrees, in some ways, and nothing against any of our liberal arts degrees, but if we continue the way we are, then we will maybe lessen the number of enlisted that will be able to move across over to the commissioned ranks, unless we are able to deliver more technical degrees and ways of providing those degrees for our enlisted force.

Because of the expeditionary nature of our mission today, it's important that we continue to find ways to offer education to our Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, and Coastguardsmen anywhere they are deployed around the world.

And I would highlight one more. Certainly, I do not go in an audience today, of our enlisted force, if there is not something of education, and typically education benefits, brought up.

We have over 50,000 Airmen in our Air Force today that DO NOT have any education benefits other than the tuition assistance that they have while they are on active duty. For whatever reason, and many of them look back and speak of a mistake that they made, they turned down their veterans benefits to carry with them after their Service.

We would like and hope that our congress would support an open season to allow some of them to rectify those mistakes and perhaps someday even in the future (applause).

It has been noted how great the old GI bill benefited our Nation. And perhaps someday, we hope sooner, that congress will recognize what an investment it is to provide an education to veterans by giving them that education, versus them having to pay for it, so that all Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Coastguardsmen will have an education once they leave the Service (applause).

Thank you again. Thank you for the great work, the enthusiasm- what you bring to our force. You truly do enhance our readiness. You enhance our lives by what you and your professions bring to us. Thank you.

MGySgt O'Keefe:

Thank you CMSAF Murray-

Our next guest speaker enlisted in the Coast Guard in 1974. Throughout her military career, she has served in numerous instructor duty assignments across the United States. For over 5 years, she served as an instructor at the Chief Petty Officer Academy, Coast Guard Training Center, Petaluma, CA. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree and is a graduate of the Chief Petty Officer's Academy. She presently serves as Command Master Chief for Maintenance and Logistics Command Pacific, Alameda, California.

Ladies and Gentlemen, representing the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard, please welcome Command Master Chief Patricia A. Stolle.

Remarks as delivered by the Command Master Chief for Maintenance and Logistics Command Pacific, U.S. Coast Guard, MCPO Patricia A. Stolle, Orlando World Center Marriott, Tuesday, 8 July 2003

MCPO Stolle:

On behalf of the 9th Master Chief of the Coast Guard, Master Chief Welch, I'd like to thank you for inviting him, and for him bailing out and selecting me to be in his place. I told him I only charge by the amount of pictures I have to take. And so far, I think there's been four. He will pay dearly. (laughter)

It sounds like we've started the stories off with icebreakers for the most part just to get over nervousness and I'm a little bit there myself. Our nice gentleman over here, (gesture to SMA Tilley) Mr. Hooray. Is it Hoorah? Hooah.

I joined the Coast Guard in 1974. That was pretty much when Vietnam was winding down and actually prior service people were coming into the Coast Guard and other Branches of the Service also. They had gotten out, gotten back, and decided that the Services weren't a bad place to hang out, so they were coming back.

I don't imagine a whole bunch of them mentioned that they were coming back to get an education. It was to come back to the family that they were comfortable with, and they picked other branches of the service going around.

I managed to pick the Coast Guard, and I'll bring this up, it sounds really cute and flaky, but you have to consider, I was an eighteen year-old. I graduated from Petaluma Senior High School, so it was nice going back to my hometown to be an instructor for five years. And for all you Coasties, I did another five years as an A-school instructor too. I tried to stay home as often as possible.

One of the things about joining the military- see the world and get an education. So I went to back to Petaluma and saw the world. Well I guess I did see New Jersey also, the other part of the world.

When I joined the Coast Guard and graduated from Petaluma Senior High School with a 1.67 Grade point average, education was not what I was thinking about. And this is where it gets flaky. Consider I'm eighteen years old please keep that in the back of your mind.

I went to the Army recruiter. Cute guy, wears green. I looked terrible in green. Not going to join the Army. Went to the Marines. He was wearing blue. He was a cute guy. But that's a prissy uniform for a farm kid. So, didn't join the Marines. Not trying to be offensive. I was eighteen, eighteen. I was eighteen. Ah, the Navy recruiter. Bright color- wore blue. This is good- I like blue, but he was ugly. I'm not joining a Service with a Navy, ugly person. We already picked on the Marines.

Now the Air Force recruiter was a woman. Interesting, because in 1974, there weren't a lot of women. I wasn't seeing any anyway. As a matter of fact, in 1974, the Coast Guard had just starting recruiting women into the Coast Guard on active duty. So, I was one of those trailblazers. Whatever they want to call those old people.

So, that pretty much, In Stolle's knowledge of opportunities to join the military, at that time, I was pretty much done, because in Petaluma California, you don't hear about the Coast Guard. At least not back in 1974. It might be a little bit better now that we have a bigger training center there. But at the time, while I was growing up, that training center was actually Army. It cleaned up well (laughter).

Now one of the highlights in Petaluma California when you've got nothing better to do, is you go with your parents to their bowling league. And for a farm girl, that's pretty good because you get to eat a hamburger that you don't know who the donor is (laughter). And lo and behold, there's a Coastie bowling on the league. And he's got a blue uniform on. And he's cute. I was sold.

I'm gonna get back to that farm girl story at the very end of this. I have a few comments that I wrote down on paper. Fortunately, very few. Because when you get this far down the line, there's just about nothing left to say. One of the things we all have in common up here is we all like reading glasses.

Enhanced readiness through education of the enlisted forces. Some of the things our Admiral mentioned this morning when he was talking was that the Coast Guard is going through major growth.

We had 2,200 people this year. We're planning on doing probably the same thing next year and the next. If you weren't this morning in the context that he brought it up, he gave you the math equation. I did pass that math CLEP by the way.

He mentioned that we had total Coast Guard right now is about 36,000. We are a very, very small Service. It's a little more difficult to do some things, every once and awhile so 2,200 people is quite a few for us.

Another thing he mentioned is that our current and future readiness is going to be determined by the attention we give to properly training our people. You have to imagine that out of those 2,200 billets, very few of those are going to be in the E-2 and E-3 range.

And you just can't hire an E-5 off the street, most of the time, at least not for boatswain mate and a few other ratings. You definitely have to teach them something.

To bridge that gap of being short the 2,200 experienced Petty Officers, and to get to the training, we had to activate a few reservists. In fact, I don't know if he mentioned it this morning, but we activated almost half of our selected reserves in the Coast Guard. And that's a very significant amount. That did help us bridge through in training these people.

Another thing we ended up doing that I heard for the first time this morning, the other Services also did a little bit of this bridging strategy, and that's bringing back some of our retirees on contracts to help teach some of these people. Training and education is important and that's definitely getting us through.

I find it funny that a bunch of these people that ended up getting high-year tenured out, which we didn't start doing until the 90s, we're now finding them useful again. Maybe there is another job for me. I'm almost there.

Our people in the Coast Guard are extremely busy right now. They are either doing the mission, they're training the new people, or they're being trained. So they don't have time really to think about getting an education.

They want to get an education as everybody's said they came in the Coast Guard to get an education and to see the world. But they don't have the time to figure out the hows to it. For the most part that's for us up here, that's for you here to tell them the hows to do it.

We have a lot of ESOs in the Coast Guard who are pretty talented. And as our Admiral mentioned this morning, they're collateral duty, most of them. We have a few that we've got primary-duty- that's all they do.

We have a couple we call full-time ESOs and that goes along with their other 'full-time' jobs. And they're doing an outstanding job.

The problem we have right now is coming up with new ways to deliver the training to get these kids to realize that education is possible no matter how busy they are.

Yesterday we gave out ESO awards in our Coast Guard session. And one of the citations for an ESO cited the person for his success in getting 90 credit hours completed on a 378, during a deployment, he was able to get the Sailors on board that ship, quite a few of them, to complete 90 college credit hours.

For some of the Navy ships that probably wouldn't sound like much cause an aircraft carrier is 5,000, 3,000? A Coast Guard cutter, our biggest- 378, has about 150 enlisted people on board. It's pretty small and they're usually underway only for two months in- two months in, two months out, two months in. So 90 is a significant amount of credits to be done.

I have to tell you, I talked to that ESO probably about a year ago. And he said they've been doing this and it's been getting higher and higher and 90 was the last one. And I asked him, before you deployed do you know you were going to have people trying to get those 90 credits? And he goes, 'No, peer pressure pretty much dragged a whole bunch more in. Once we got underway, the kids that didn't have anything to do decided studying with the kids that were doing it was a little more fun than sitting around whining that there was nothing to do.' So, dragging people is probably my mindset, especially with a 1.67 grade point average.

Another ESO found time to get some of our 378s, which is typically our most difficult people to get education. It's a little bit harder for them; he found a professor willing to take a two-month cruise and to provide training, or actually courses onboard that ship. And I'm not sure how many people completed those courses, but we've had a lot more professors interested in taking two-month cruises. I'm not sure we're going to get them to go to the Bering Sea in Alaska, There are a lot of dead fish up there you can count, but I don't think they're going to be wanting to go there.

Initiatives at this point for the hows- that's how we have some people doing it. Other initiatives that are helping us get the hows done for these people like SOCCoast and SOCCoast Afloat.

SOCCoast Afloat is extremely important to us. I've heard a lot of people say modern technology is wonderful, you can get these onboard ships now. You can take your laptop to the field, plug in and wire up, you're good to go. It doesn't work like that on ships that are 30, 40, 50 years old. You just can't plug a whole bunch of things into it without making it go boom. I'm a yeoman by the way. I am the yeoman. So it's not that easy.

There're times when they can't even log in. There're times when a satellite doesn't latch up. It's gonna be a little difficult taking a distance learning course that's a little bit more structured with deadlines. There're not going to be able to do it as well. If there's any possibility that they're not gonna be able to complete it, they won't start it.

SOCCoast Afloat, with any kind of luck and a lot of determination from most of you people out here, if you can give us courses that are on CD-ROMs that don't need interaction and we don't need to log in, but we can sit down and actually do the course work on the CD and maybe download it sometime when we get into a port where we actually can plug up, that's where the biggest bang for the buck is going to be for us- for at least our deployed units.

Tuition Assistance has been mentioned quite often. We've gotten the 'how do you get a degree' done. And we've pretty much figured out how to take care of the money part of how to get a degree.

As many of you know, our junior enlisted people don't make all that much money. And CDs cost a lot of money now. And that X-box is just about ready to kill ya. So you've got to save your disposable income for other things. But we managed to take care of some of the money issues with Tuition Assistance.

As you've heard our Admiral say this morning, he's not having any problems with funding because the Admiral of the Coast Guard says he won't have any problems with funding. I'm not sure exactly how long that will float that boat. But he's still able to find money for tuition assistance even though it's grown I want to say to eight million- I think is what I heard yesterday.

The other way we've been handling some of our educational expenses is through the help of our Coast Guard Mutual Assistance foundation. Our Coast Guard Foundation, which gives grants, helps take care of the books, the registration, and the tuition.

Another one of those things that people say, 'I can't start my education cause I don't have enough money.' It's quite possible in the Coast Guard to get a four-year degree and not spend a dime. So the money is pretty much taken care of, if they want to find it, or if they have somebody that can drag them into the office and find it for them- because sometimes, they're not looking.

For us in the future, what we have the problem with right now is the time investment. That's the only thing they have to actually put into this is time to actually do the degree. Obviously, nobody's going to do it for them. And finding the time for them is going to be a little difficult for us.

For our future state in the Coast Guard, we mentioned that 2,200 people and where they need to be. We need them to be E-5s and E-6s. It takes about, in the Coast Guard, 4 or 5 years to raise an E-5 or an E-6- some obviously a lot faster and some a lot slower.

But with 2,200 people, I don't know if the Admiral mentioned this morning, but our reenlistment rate is only 65 percent, not as high as the Navy, 72. But if you guys got some extra boatswain mates who are really good? (gestures to Master Chief Russell) Send them our way.

65%, if you look at that 2,200, I'm not going to do the math, but if those people decide to get out in four years, we're going to be in a lot of trouble.

We can't afford for them to get out. We need them to be E-5s and E-6s. As the Navy Master Chief mentioned, the Navy did a study a while ago. And it's interesting that I read it in the Navy Times, probably the late 90s, while I was an instructor at the Chief Petty Officer's Academy, one of the things that study actually said, and the Master Chief repeated this morning, was that people who start on their education, actually don't get out of the Service they're in. They actually stay in longer and they make E-5 faster.

So it's absolutely imperative for the readiness of the Coast Guard to get these kids started on education a lot sooner than they might even think they want to start. They have the time. Obviously, they've got the x-boxes.

One of the other things, along with the Navy study, that I've looked into is our Coast Guard Exit Study. We call it an exit study but what it really is, at the end of your four-year contract, you actually log on to the computer and you tell this nice little computer either why you're staying in or why you're getting out.

It's interesting that one of the top reasons Coasties stay in the Coast Guard is for an education. They like what they're doing. They've apparently been hooked up. They're getting their degrees. Our Tuition Assistance requests are going through the ceiling. I don't think that our Coast Guard Institute has ever been able to keep up with degree plans for people wanting the information.

The other interesting part about those exit surveys though, is the 35%. If you want to assume that 65% are staying in the Coast Guard and reenlisting, then probably about 35 % are leaving. Those people are leaving to get an education.

And I kind of think that the majority of those 35% are leaving to get an education because we in the Coast Guard have not done a good enough marketing job to hook those kids into education before they realized they had to get out.

If they had started earlier, maybe they wouldn't be leaving in the first place. And that's the target audience I need to be going after right now, because I can't afford for them to get out. They need to stay in. They need to be E-5s and E-6s.

Education makes them a more motivated Soldier, Sailor, Airman. And we need more of those.

The last thing I will mention, in my little notes, are discharge packages. And this goes to speaking why we need to be hooking these kids into education sooner. In my job, I have to go through quite a few discharge packages. Actually the Command Master Chiefs in the Coast Guard- we go through all the discharge packages.

And I have to tell you that I have not reviewed one discharge package for a Sailor getting discharged on alcohol that was working on his education.

And I've not reviewed one discharge package for somebody being kicked out on drugs who was working on their education.

And probably the most telling in the Coast Guard, I've not reviewed one package for somebody being kicked out for failure to adjust who was working on their education. I don't know if the other Services have that failure to adjust thing. Psychs. You go to a psychiatrist, it's amazing what you come up with. (laughter)

Lifelong learning should not wait until you're age 30. It should start at year one, year two before habits start with these kids a little bit worse than they were before.

That 35% that I think are getting out. I think a lot of those are just like I was when I came in the Coast Guard. I didn't work on my education until 1996 when somebody sat me down and said, 'you know Trish, all you have to do is nine courses and you could have a bachelors degree.' That's like, yea, get out! Did I tell you that I had a grade point average of 1.67? (laughter) Nine courses later and obviously a lot more work because there's a little bit more to it than nine tests; I had my bachelor's degree.

And I think that 35% of those kids that are out there right now, they're actually telling us that they want an education, and in their career surveys that they're doing for us, they're telling us that their goal is to get an education. But I think when they first come in, that first six months, part of that 35% is giving us lip service.

I think we need to work hard to turn that lip service around, and get them actually moving forward to a goal that they're just paying lip service to.

That's my job, to go after them; and hopefully you can continue doing your great work and I really want to applaud the other Branches of Services. Because being as small as we are, we steal from you shamelessly.

Better-educated people make better Soldiers, they make better husbands, they make better wives, they make better PTA members, they make better people. We need to get them started at age 18 when they first come in the door.

Thank you very much.

MGySgt O'Keefe:

Thank you Command Master Chief Stolle-

Our next guest speaker enlisted in the Army in 1982. A native of Baltimore Maryland, she serves as the personal advisor to the Chief of the Army Reserve on all enlisted soldier matters especially relating to training, family readiness, support, and quality of life. She has served as squad leader, section leader, platoon sergeant, first sergeant, and command sergeant major. Distinguishing herself throughout her military career, she was the first woman to serve as class president at the United States Sergeants Major Academy (class 48) and is the first woman to serve as the Command Sergeant Major of the Army Reserve. She is also a graduate of the Advance NCO Course, Battle Staff Operations Course, First

Sergeant's Course, Instructor Training Course, and many others... She holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration and is currently pursuing her graduate degree in management and international relations.

Ladies and gentlemen, representing the Reserve enlisted forces, please welcome Command Sergeant Major Michele S. Jones.

***Remarks as delivered by the Command Sergeant Major Michele S. Jones,
Command Sergeant Major, U.S. Army Reserve, Orlando World Center Marriott,
Tuesday, 8 July 2003***

I am representing all of the Reserve Components, regardless of Service, National Guard, and Air Guard. So on that note, greetings to you- thank you for everything that you do. I am a product of education in the military.

The theme, enhanced readiness through education clearly articulates one of the major contributions that Service members of the Reserve Component bring to the Army. Education is paramount to the readiness of the Reserve Component. It is a critical element that differentiates the Reserve Component from the Active Component.

With multiple career fields such as medical, MPs, civil affairs, and psychology operations, which require continuous education in the civilian community, certification, and hands-on training, are all concentrated in the Reserve Component.

A major portion of the Army in the support arena is in the Reserve Component. Therefore they must be educated, as with the full-time.

There is an increased emphasis on education in the Reserve Component. Why? Not just because we're special, we think we're special. But there are three major reasons.

One, the major source of income is not from the Army. It's the private sector. The private sector requires more education. So therefore, the Reserve Component Soldier, Sailor, Airman, Marine, Coastguardsman, require that education.

Secondly, many are already enrolled in degree programs.

And third, they are professionals, para-professionals, technical experts, and business owners.

How does that equate to readiness for the Reserve Component? It is, and for the Army, a diverse population. In every facet of every business of every career within the Army in the civilian community that does it day to day. That have the opportunities that the civilian provides and brings that to the Army.

That is why is it paramount, and I keep saying that, to the Reserve Component to continue that, to increase opportunities for the Reserve Component and their family members.

We have an elevated level of education. More enlisted Service members in the Reserve Component hold advanced degrees than any other Component. That's the reality. I won't go through the numbers. I like people to do their own homework – it's part of education- research, but more enlisted members in the Reserve Component hold advanced degrees.

I'm not going for ten minutes. I know you're hungry. It is imperative that we continue education opportunities to increase readiness for the Armed Forces- every Branch. It is important that we add educational opportunities for family members.

And I'm going to leave you with this thought because we are going to stay on time. Our Service members serve to protect our constitution, which provides educational opportunities for every American citizen. Should they not have the same opportunities in which they serve either every day or as a Reserve Component member? (applause)

So, we serve to protect our rights to their education and they too deserve educational opportunities. Maybe not everyday, but when they can. And I thank you for taking care of my Soldiers, every Service member, every Marine, Sailor, Airman, and Coast Guard.

Thank you very much I think I put us back on time- hooah. And that's a HOOAH! Thank you very much.

MGySgt O'Keefe:

Thank you Command Sergeant Major Jones-

To all our Senior Enlisted Panel Members, in appreciation of your presence here at Worldwide 2003, we have a gift for you (Gifts on Table)- On your departure from the stage. Please join me in one last thank you to our Sr. Enlisted Panel. Thank you- and have a great symposium!